

## THE SIXTH SERMON

### UPON THE FIRST CHAPTER

- 15** But when it pleased God, who chose me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace,
- 16** To reveal his Son by me, to the end I should preach him among the Gentiles: I did not thereupon take counsel of flesh and blood:
- 17** Nother went I back again to Jerusalem to those that had bin Apostles before me: but went my way into Arabie, and returned again to Damasco.
- 18** Afterward, a three years after, I went again to Jerusalem to visit Peter, and abode with him fifteen days, etc. —  
<480115> GALATIANS 1:15-18

WE HAVE SEEN what case is handled here by Saint Paul: that is to wit, that men ought not to be advanced so high, as that the glory of God should be defaced or diminished in respect of them, or of the reputation that we have of their persons. For oftentimes we be given to commend creatures too much, so as the same carrieth a prejudice to God's word. And although Saint Paul compare himself here with the other Apostles: yet hath he not regard of his own person, but is desirous that the gospel which was committed unto him should be received with all reverence. And for the bringing thereof to pass, he allegeth here God's graces rather than his own virtues. For he doth not allege or rehearse here what he had done as of himself, but what he hath done through the change that was happened unto him, which men might perceive to be from heaven, and not through his own endeavor. Yea and we see, how he declareth freely, that all his changing after that manner, ought to be fathered upon the mere goodness of God: for he useth the term of good *Pleasure*. Wherein he excludeth, whatsoever is of man, to the end it should not be thought that he minded to reserve aught [*anything*] to himself. Again, he saith not that he had sought the Gospel, but that he had it by revelation. Thirdly he saith it was

God that called him. And lastly he saith that it was not for any readiness that was in himself aforehand (as peradventure a man might put one of us to some service when he findeth us meet for a thing:) but he saith that God had separated him aforehand from his mother's womb. We see then that Saint Paul intendeth not to exalt himself, but only to make Jesus Christ known by his means, and to keep the doctrine of the Gospel from impeachment under the color that other men had gotten great reputation through the whole world. And (as we see) the troublers that were come into the Country of Galatia, took a deceitful covert under the name of the Apostles. Saint Paul therefore showeth, that the thing which he held, he had not of men. And likewise also he braggeth not that he had conquered or deserved aught [*anything*], but that at leastwise it was known how God had so set out his grace in him, as the same served to make the doctrine of more authority which he bear abroad. But by the way, there is no doubt, but that in the person of Saint Paul, we have here a mirror of God's goodness, in such sort as it showeth itself towards us, and whereof we be partakers, to the end that all men from the smallest to the greatest, should learn to humble themselves. Therefore when we come to the knowledge of the Gospel, although we have no such revelations as Paul had: yet notwithstanding, this thing doth always take place and hath his continual course, namely that it is not of ourselves, nother [*neither*] can men put forth themselves to it of themselves, but all proceedeth of God's mere goodness, for that he hath so ordained. For the words that Saint Paul useth, exclude all respects that can be had, as when one man shall do another man good for some desert, or for some other thing that he findeth in his person. He doth no more here, but set down simply, that forasmuch as God findeth no worthiness in us, therefore when it pleaseth him to accept us for his children, and draw us to the knowledge of his Gospel, he showeth that his so doing proceedeth of his own purpose and will. Thus then the thing that we be taught here, is that faith is in such wise the mere gift of God, that men cannot challenge to themselves the praise of their coming to the light of the Gospel, where their happiness and welfare lie, but ought to glorify God, because he hath bound them to him by choosing them, and calling them to lead them thereunto: for as for the cause thereof, he seeketh it in himself and in his own mere mercy. As much is to be said of all the charges whereabouts God employeth us. True it is that men choose one another according as they see ability in them to be put to some

business: so as one is set to rule a country, another to preach God's word, and another to this or that. In so doing we have an eye to the things that God hath put into every man, and it is good reason so to do. But yet for all that, howsoever the case stand, he that is so chosen, (what handsomeness and ability so ever he have to go through with his duty) must understand that God had marked him out before, and that he is not framed thereto by his own policy, but that God hath wrought it in him. And therefore let us not think that he which hath a better and more forward [*earnest*] wit than other men, hath it of himself. For whereof is it long that we be not blockish as many creatures are whom we see to be without wit or reason? Who is it that hath put such difference between men? It is certain that of necessity God must have marked us out, and appointed what we should be, even before we were born. And therefore whosoever hath either wit or any other excellent gift above other men, let him assure himself that God hath fashioned him thereunto. Again, when we be come to age, God must be fain [*pleased*] to thrust us still forward and to guide us, howbeit that the same be by a secret power. We see that the Paynims [*Pagans, Heathens*] have some care of the bringing up of their children, and that some of them have a better mind to their study than others. But yet howsoever they fare, it is God that guideth and governeth them from above, so as all ought to be attributed unto him. And here ye see why Saint Paul having said that God revealed his son unto him, addeth that as he had called him to preach, so also he had erst [*earlier*] sholed [*brought*] him out aforehand from others: that is to say, he had held him fast as he that wist well to what service he were best to apply him. Then seeing it is so, we have cause to walk in humbleness, assuring ourselves that if there be any excellency in us, we must not every man brag of it as of his own, but acknowledge God to be the author of all that he hath bestowed upon us, and that his mere goodness is the fountain where out of we draw. Now if this extend to the smallest gifts of grace which we receive of him: what doth it to the inestimable benefit which he bestoweth upon us, when he calleth us to the knowledge of his Gospel, when he openeth us the gate of Heaven, to show us that he holdeth us all for his children and that he is our father, and when our Lord Jesus Christ is so knit unto us, that by his means we be already made sure of the endless life? Can we say that we have anything of our own, when God maketh us partakers of such a treasure? Ye see then that the thing which we have to gather upon

this strain, is that God hath so reserved to himself the disposing of man's life, that it is his peculiar office to guide our steps: and he knoweth whereunto he hath ordained us. And therefore it becometh us to magnify his mercy, in that he hath vouchsafed to enlighten us by believing his Gospel, to the intent we might know him to be our father, and rest upon him, and pray unto him with full trust. Let us assure ourselves, that the having of this cometh not of our own freewill, but of his touching of us to the quick by his holy spirit. For our Lord Jesus Christ who hath all wisdom in him, cannot be known of us except he be revealed, according as he himself avoucheth that no man cometh unto him except the father draw him. (<sup>430644</sup> John 6:44) Behold, Jesus Christ was conversant in the world at that time: he preached the Gospel and published it with open mouth: and yet notwithstanding he saith that no man shall come unto him, that is to say, no man shall frame himself to his obedience, except the father have wrought in his heart by the power of his holy spirit. Now that Jesus Christ is separated from us as in respect of distance of place, and as in respect of human nature, so as we see him not here beneath to have any visible knowledge of him: how shall we come unto him, if we be not drawn by the grace that is spoken of here? And if faith be a special gift of God, and we cannot come to our Lord Jesus Christ except we be led unto him by the hand of God his father: how can they that should draw others do it of their own ability? Needs then must God utter yet a second working. And that is the cause why Saint Paul setteth down both twain of them: that is to wit, first that he had been enlightened himself, and secondly that he had been ordained and stablished as a Master and teacher to draw other men, to the good way of Salvation wherein God had set him. Wherefore let us assure ourselves, that God granteth a singular grace to such as have charge to preach the Gospel, when he vouchsafeth to apply them thereunto. And that is not only to the end that we which are in that state and office, should walk in the fear of God, and not challenge aught [*anything*] to ourselves: but also to the intent that every man should in that behalf have a record of the love that God beareth to his Church. If men should thrust in themselves on their own heads, it might be said that we were taught at all adventure. But when as we know that no man is of sufficient ability to open his mouth to speak of Jesus Christ as he ought to be spoken of, but that it is God's doing to send forth those of whom it behooveth us to be taught: thereby we perceive the care that he hath of us,

and find much better that he is our father and hath not forgotten us. And moreover this serveth to engrave the truth of the Gospel in our hearts, to the end we may know how it is not a doctrine that proceedeth of men, but as of God's sending: And that although he be served by his creatures: yet notwithstanding he maketh them as instruments of his spirit, and it is he himself that governeth them. Ye see in effect how we may make our profit of this doctrine. But yet do we understand God's grace the better, in that it is said that he hath chosen us and kept us to himself, even from our mother's womb. And yet is this no let, but that he hath also moreover reserved us from before the creation of the world, according as Saint Paul speaketh in other texts: (<490104> Ephesians 1:4) howbeit it is enough that in this place he excludeth all that ever cometh of men. When a child cometh out of his mother's womb, what bringeth he with him? What worthiness [hath he]? Surely he is a poor carcass full of filth and uncleanness. Now then if God mark us out at the time when there is nothing in us worthy to be accepted of him, or which deserveth any love or liking: we may perceive thereby, that if he apply us to any honorable service afterward, it is by reason of his own mercy, accordingly as they whom God gathereth to be of his flock, are called instruments of his goodness. Thus ye see that the cause why Saint Paul speaketh purposely of his birth, is to show that there was no preparation on his own behalf when God drew him, but that God had respect to his own eternal election, the which he continued, in that it was his will that the same creature should come into the world, and had always guided it to that end. Then let us assure ourselves, that whensoever God bestoweth any of his benefits upon us, we must always come back to this principle, namely to mount up to his everlasting purpose. Not that we be able to comprehend how or why he hath chosen us, (for that passeth all capacity of man.) But for that we must conclude, that God's preferring of us before those whom he leaveth as offcasts, is not for that he findeth us worthy or capable of such a benefit, but because he had so ordained before he had created us and put us into the world, yea and even before there was either heaven or earth. And that is the cause why it is said that it behooveth us to be given to our Lord Jesus Christ before we can come unto him. (<430637> John 6:37) And who is it that maketh that gift? It is not every man's offering of himself of his own mere motion. True it is that we ought to do so: for our faith importeth obedience and sacrifice, so as it becometh us to dedicate ourselves to God

willingly, and to make a present both of our bodies and of our souls unto the Lord Jesus Christ, as to him that hath bought us. Nevertheless, this (as I said) is not of our own mere motion, but God must be fain [*pleased*] to bow us thereunto. And why so? Even because we were his afore. And how belong we to him? not by inheritance, nor by any title that we can allege on our own behalf, but only because he chose us. Now then we see what this text importeth. But let us come back to the chief point that Saint Paul treateth of here. For the things that I have discoursed hitherto, are but to show that our adoption serveth not to bereave God of his glory, which thing they do that brag of their own freewill, virtues, and merits. Wherefore let us put away all such pride, and confess that we be beholden to God for all things. Howbeit let us also consider therewithal, that Saint Paul's rehearsing of this change, is to assure us thoroughly, that the doctrine which he delivered us in his life, and which we have now still in writing, is not of this world, nor forged of his own brain, but a thing whereunto he was prepared of God. And we have need to be grounded upon such a certainty, for else, whereas our faith ought to get the upper hand of Satan and of all things that are against our Salvation: it should always stagger, yea and be but a wavering opinion. But now let us see a little what battles we have to endure. If we leaned unto men, what should become of us? what steadiness would there be in us? Seeing we be daily assailed with so many temptations, that by all likelihood we should be overwhelmed and perish: as for example, in that our nature is so wholly inclined to distrust, to lying, to vanity, and to deceit: and again, in that we have so many lusts, which are as storms and whirlwinds to overthrow all our faith: were it possible for us to stand or to have any constancy, if we were not grounded upon God, and knew that the doctrine which we follow is the pure truth that proceedeth out of his mouth. Then standeth it us on hand to have that first of all. True it is that among the Papists men will content themselves with some imagination. For it is enough with them, to believe as the Church believeth, as they say. Howbeit in the meanwhile the Devil holdeth them in his nets, and they be like silly beasts that are stark blind. But as for us, we must be out of all doubt, that we be taught of God, and that the word which we follow is his. Therefore it behooveth us to give care to the preaching of the doctrine which was brought by Saint Paul, and therewithal to consider that Saint Paul did not thrust himself in of his own head, but that God served his own turn by him, as by an instrument

that he had ordained to that purpose. Thus ye see whereunto it behooveth us to refer that which is spoken here. For had Saint Paul followed Christianity from his childhood, or had he learned it at school, truly it had been a gift of God: but then had not we had such an open avouchment and evident record as we have by his change, in that of a ravening wolf he became not only a sheep, but also a shepherd: and whereas he had been a deadly enemy of the Gospel, now he is become a servant of our Lord Jesus Christ: and whereas erst [*earlier*] he had nothing in him but blasphemy, cruelty, pride and rebellion, we see he hath the zeal of God's spirit, he hath all humility and meekness. Seeing then that we perceive so great and sudden a change, it is as much as if God had uttered his power of purpose that Saint Paul should not be taken for a mortal man. And verily for the same cause also did God take up Moyses into the Mountain, and keep him there by the space of forty days, when he intended to have his law published. (<sup><022418></sup>Exodus 24:18) For had Moyses [forthwith] preached the things which he knew by revelation: surely he had discharged himself of his duty as a true servant of God: but the thing had not been known to be so excellent as it was, in that God kept him forty days upon the Mountain, and afterward made him come down with a shining face, so as men could no more abide to look upon him without dazzling of their eyes, than to look upon the brightness of the Sun, but he was fain [*pleased*] to put a veil before him. Therefore all these things serve to prove, that he devised not the law of his own head, but was as an Angel of heaven, yea and much more excellent than an Angel, forasmuch as God had ordained him thereunto. In like case is it with the Apostles, for Jesus Christ could well have chosen such as had been exercised a long while beforehand in the Law and holy Scriptures, and had some countenance to the worldward, and had already purchased some reputation and degree among men: but he chose poor silly souls and handicrafts men without any learning at all, and yet notwithstanding made them to speak after such a strange fashion, that through the eloquence and highness of knowledge which was in them, they passed all such as had been esteemed most skillful and sharp-witted in the world. We see then that by God's so sudden changing of them, their doctrine was made of so much the more authority unto us. Even so standeth the case concerning Saint Paul. That then is a thing which ought to confirm us, and whensoever we be taught by that which he hath left in writing, let us assure ourselves that God

speaketh to us, and that he was the instrument of our Lord Jesus Christ. He addeth furthermore, *that he did not then commune with flesh and blood*, that is to say with any mortal man, *but went straitways into Arabia, where he abode three years, and from thence returned to Jerusalem to see Peter, and saw not any other of the Disciples than him and James*. Herein it might seem at the first blush, that Saint Paul had too greatly disdained the rest of the Apostles. For although he had the knowledge of the Gospel, yet might he well have been more confirmed, and the consent and agreement that God's children have among themselves, doth strengthen them the more, as we find by experience. It seemeth then that Saint Paul disdained a mean that was fit for himself, and might have stood the whole Church in good stead. But there was a special reason that drew him the other way: which was, that men should not surmise that it came to pass by worldly means, for it was not yet sufficiently known. Then if he had gone to Jerusalem, and communed with the Apostles, men would have said, this man is in some doubt, and therefore he went thither to dispute, and in the end was overcome. And so it would have been thought that it had been of man's doing, and the glory of God had been so much darkened thereby. But when as Saint Paul had been a man full of cruelty, that sought nothing but to abolish the memorial of the Gospel, a shedder of the blood of the Martyrs, a blasphemers of God, and an enforcer of the poor weaklings to renounce Jesus Christ: when as men saw him to be such a one, that is to say, as a man besides himself with such rage, as he would never leave till he had borne down the Gospel: and yet notwithstanding saw him so changed in one minute of an hour, and no man spake to him: yea and blinded and beaten down to the earth, so as he lay there like a poor dead man, and afterward was raised up again as it were out of his grave, and his eyes by miracle opened, so as God sent a man unto him of no great fame named Ananias, who baptized him, strengthened him, and made him to receive the visible tokens of the holy Ghost: and that thereupon he went his way into Arabia, a country where Jesus Christ had never been spoken of afore, (for although the Jews had been somewhat dispersed, yet was the Gospel utterly unknown:) I say, when we see how Saint Paul went that way to work: who is he that can say that he learned aught [*anything*] of men, or that he had been won to it by disputation, or by reason, or by any other manner of [worldly] means at all? Nay rather we shall be constrained to grant, that whatsoever was to be found in him, was of God's putting into

him. That then was the special reason why Saint Paul communed not with the Apostles. And truly here he speaketh of them as it were in way of scorn, terming them flesh and blood. Howbeit, it is not a defacing of the gifts which they had received of God, when we make comparison between our Lord Jesus Christ and them. And we ought to mark that well. For when we speak of men, surely they may well be called flesh and blood, as we see they are called in <sup><600113></sup> 1 John 1:13. Ye see then that men of their own nature are nothing but corruption. And forasmuch as they would fain [*happily*] presume too much of their own wisdom and power, or of their own righteousness and courage: therefore to put away all that pride and fond overweening [*high opinion*], God saith What are ye? flesh and blood. (<sup><401617></sup> Matthew 16:17) Yea and sometimes by this saying *flesh and blood*, the holy Scripture meaneth this sinful nature of ours which we have since the fall of Adam. (<sup><430306></sup> John 3:6) For we have no more the uncorruptness that was in us, but contrariwise we be utterly ignorant or rather beastly, and there is nothing but filthiness in us, so as we be not able to do anything that is aught [*anything*] worth, furtherforth than God governeth us. Lo in what wise we be termed flesh and blood. And therefore it is said, that our being enlightened in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, cometh not to us by heritage, nor is had of flesh and blood, but that we be made the children of God through his begetting of us new again by his holy spirit, yea even after a special manner. For we would hold altogether with the world, if he should let us alone to ourselves. Again, in Saint <sup><401617></sup> Matthew 16:17 it is said, that flesh and blood had not told Peter and his fellows that Jesus Christ was the son of God: but the heavenly father. Thus ye see how men are called flesh and blood: namely when they be compared unto God, to show that we have not aught [*anything*] but corruption in us. True it is that our souls are immortal: nevertheless the Scripture speaketh so of us in way of contempt, to the end we should be void of presumption. But as for the Apostles, they were already regenerated by God's spirit: and therefore there was more in them than flesh and blood, as we have seen by the Text last alleged. Yet notwithstanding, whensoever they be compared with God, then must all that is of our own nature be comprehended under the terms of flesh and blood. And why? For else it should come in question, to know whether the Apostles might by their own worthiness and excellency prejudice the Gospel, as the foresaid troublers pretended to shroud themselves withal.

But Saint Paul showeth, that if God withdraw that which is his, there shall remain nothing either in Peter, John, or James, but that they be the sons of Adam as other men are, so as there is nothing in them but corruption. So then let us not abuse the gracious gifts that God hath put into them, to deface the Majesty of him and the Gospel. Thus ye see after what manner Saint Paul speaketh here of the Apostles. For we have heard how he said heretofore, that if an Angel from heaven should gainsay the Gospel he ought to be hated and cursed as if he were a Devil. And how so? Is it meet that men should speak so reproachfully of the Angels which are so noble creatures, and which are called the heavenly principalities and powers of God? (<sup>490121</sup> Ephesians 1:21) It is no wrong at all to do so to them, when it cometh to the yielding of sovereign dominion to our Lord Jesus Christ who is their head, for it behooveth them to be placed under him. Therefore let us not think we have any wrong offered us, though we were trodden a hundred times under foot, so it be to the exalting of God's name, and that our Lord Jesus Christ may have his duty and supremacy reserved unto him, so as he may be heard both of great and small, and all men submit themselves to him in true obedience of faith. Now hereupon we may gather how blind the wretched Papists are in honoring the Apostles and Martyrs in such wise, that God is robbed of his honor and service, insomuch as it should seem that all that belongeth and is reserved to him is put to the spoil and prey [among them.] For what difference make they between him and his creatures? And besides that, our Lord Jesus Christ is as good as buried, because they pluck away the office from him that was given him. For instead of being our Advocate to give us entrance unto God his father, and that we should go right forth unto him if we intend to have our prayers and supplications heard: they have set up an infinite multitude of Advocates, Patrons and Intercessors, and Jesus Christ is Jack out of office. Now when we see that the creatures have obtained such honor among men, that by that means God is as it were thrust back, and his word borne down: thereby we perceive that the Devil hath turned all upside down. Therefore howsoever the world go, let our esteeming of men be after such a sort, as God may hold still that which is his own: and if we compare him with his creatures, let us consider that all is but vanity, and whatsoever commendation they have here, the same is a record which God giveth us of his love, to the end we should keep onwards unto him, and he be exalted. Yea and let us consider, that we cannot honor God as he

deserveth, but by submitting ourselves to his word. For all they that make many Ceremonies to bear men in hand that they desire to serve God, are misliked of him, until such time as they be subdued to him, and also to his word. And that also is a cause why Saint Paul striveth for the authority of the Gospel. For he thinks it not enough to have God and Jesus Christ talked of: but he will also have every man to receive the doctrine contained in the Gospel, without gainsaying. And hereby we see, how that nowadays all Religion is decayed, and there is nothing but hellish confusion in Popery. For there is talking enough of our Lord Jesus Christ, but after what sort? Know they his power? Can they tell to what end he is sent of God his Father, and what benefits he bringeth us? No whit at all. He shall be called the Savior of the world, and in the meanwhile every man seeketh his salvation in himself, or at some Saint's hand of his own forging. Lo at what point they be. And therefore so much the more doth it stand us upon, to bear in mind the thing that is shown us here: which is, that whensoever God is spoken of, the very Sun and Moon must needs be darkened (as it is said in the Prophet,) (<231310> Isaiah 13:10) and there is not any that must not be thrust under foot, to the end that God may have all preeminence. And forasmuch as God accepteth not any honor or service that we do unto him, until we be subject to his word: let us receive the whole doctrine of the Gospel and let nothing pluck us back from yielding such reverence thereunto, as to submit ourselves to all that is contained therein. This in effect is the thing that we have to gather upon this place, where the Apostles are termed flesh and blood. Furthermore whereas Saint Paul addeth, *that he went to Jerusalem to see Peter*: it is a sure record that his former speaking of his going into Arabia, was not of any pride or disdain, but to the end that God's grace might be known, and that no worldly means might be made as a vail to keep men from knowing that Jesus Christ had wrought by singular miracle, in that a man which had been so stubborn before, had been brought to the lure. Thus ye see on the one side, how Saint Paul meant to reserve unto God his due: and on the other side, that yet notwithstanding he meant to show there was good agreement between him and the other Apostles. And even so must we do. For in many men there are always two evil extremities to be found in that behalf. There are some scoffers which make pretense to magnify god's grace, and in the mean time are but traitors to God, full of poison and pride, preferring their own dreams and dotages before him. If a man say

unto them, how now? Seeing that God hath granted grace to many men, and they be known to be men well seen in the holy scriptures, and they employ themselves faithfully in preaching the Gospel to us: therefore why do ye not agree with them? O (say they) I have not to do with any man living upon earth, I ground myself upon none but God. These are the proud and stately, which pretend to have the holy Ghost in their heads and certain revelations of the holy Ghost, and yet notwithstanding they break the unity of the Church, and despise God's gracious gifts. So much the more therefore doth it stand us on hand to keep the measure that we see here. For although Saint Paul have on the one side declared, that he went straight ways into Arabia as soon as he was converted, to the end it might be known that Jesus Christ had been his only master and teacher, as indeed he only ought always to have preeminence over us: yet nevertheless he hath also well showed [on the other side,] that he meant to be in unity of good concord with the rest of the Apostles, and was desirous to have it known to the whole world, that his mind was to agree with them, and that they were as instruments of the holy Ghost. For as I have showed afore, it is no small help to the confirmation of our faith, when we be so linked together, and that God calleth not any one man alone, but hath many that submit themselves to him, so that it is seen that they be all of one mind, that they aim all at one mark, and that they show themselves to be God's children, by going on forward to the heritage of the heavenly life. That help then is fit for the confirmation of our faith: and it was for Saint Paul to show that he was rightly linked with the Apostles, and meant not to separate himself from them. Wherefore let us mark the manner of dealing that is showed us here, to the intent we swarve not to the one extremity or the other. But there are some so lightheaded, that they will give over the doctrine of the Gospel for right naught, and as soon as they hear a man speak, by and by they must receive whatsoever he saith. Howbeit, if we be no better settled than so, shall we be able to withstand all the alarms which the Devil our mortal enemy will give us? Then must men stand stout to their tackling, and all of us from the most to the least, must stick fast together to our Lord Jesus Christ. For like as he is our head, so must he also be exalted, and (as the Prophet Esay saith) he is the mark that all men must look at. (<sup>231112</sup> Isaiah 11:12) Sith [*since*] it is so, let us learn to forbear our resting in such wise upon the outward appearance of men, that the same should impeach the majesty of God's

Son. But yet nevertheless, when we be once fully settled upon that point: we must all of us be contented to be taught of him that is given us to be our teacher, and not be so proud as to stand every man in his own conceit, (for so shall we but make variance in the Church:) but desire to agree together, and every of us put forth that which is given him, that the unity of our faith may be [as a bond] to knit us together, so as we may make one Temple of God. For it is not said for nought, that we be the lively stones whereof God's Temple is built. Now if every of us should be sundered from other, and left alone by himself: what would become of it? Should there be any building? No: but contrariwise there would be utter desolation. If we covet to have God dwell among us, and to be of household with us, we must worship him truly, and every of us apply himself as much as he can possibly to his neighbors. Not that we must shrink from God to cleave to men (for it were better that we should all of us be at discord one with another, and together by the ears as whote [*hot*] as fire among ourselves:) but when we be knit unto God, that is a good harmony: and that is the mean for us to hold the way that Saint Paul held, who would not match himself with the Apostles to darken God's glory, or to hinder the doctrine of the Gospel, and yet notwithstanding failed not to come from a strange country to seek them, yea even with great travail, and with the enduring of right hard temptation: for (as we see) they charged him to have been a persecutor of God and his truth. Seeing that Saint Paul came after that sort to show how conformable he was with the rest of the Apostles, and to give record thereof to the whole Church: therein we see, that the desirousness which he had to serve God, and his stoutness to advance God's word above all creatures, letted [*prevented*] him not to be full of courtesy and modesty also. And even so must we do too. That is to say, we must receive the consent of our brethren, and seek to conform ourselves to them in such wise, as we may all be members of one body, and Jesus Christ be our head, and not be scattered asunder, nor every man walk alone by himself, but seek to communicate after such manner one with another, as every man may guide his neighbor, and all go on forward to one mark, and each of us give courage to other, so as there may be seen a good agreement among us. True it is that we cannot have peace with all men: we shall fail greatly of that. And therefore Saint Paul in another place saith, that we must seek to be at peace with all men, at leastwise as much as is in us: (<sup><451218></sup>Romans 12:18) whereby he showeth, that we shall be

constrained to be at variance with many folks. For the Devil hath many underlings, and they be all of them bent against God's word: and we also must set ourselves against them, if we intend to have the pure doctrine of the Gospel on our side. But howsoever the case stand, if we see any man willing to submit himself to our Lord Jesus Christ, let us receive him, let us prevent him, let us seek to agree wholly together, and let us not look to be honored above other men, nor say how now? If I should agree with such a man, it would seem that I am become his underling. Woe be to us if we have such pride in us. But let our only seeking be, to have Jesus Christ to be our head, and in such wise become members of his body, as we may all worship him, and call upon him with one mouth in unity of faith.

And now let us fall down before the Majesty of our good God with acknowledgment of our faults, praying him to make us feel them more and more, to the end we may mislike them, and beseech him to amend them by his holy spirit, that being quite rid of our sins and wretchedness, we may be renewed after his Image, so as he may be glorified in all our life, and in the meanwhile bear with us in our frailty, till he have brought us to the perfection from whence we be all gone away. And so let us all say, Almighty God heavenly father, etc.